Joe Cummings, et al, Indonesia : a travel survival ki

Apart from infrequent trade with the coastal inhabitants the interior peoples were so little affected by the outside world that 30 years ago they were apparently still taking heads! The mountain villages were hilltop fortresses above valleys so steep that horses were useless and during the rainy season some of the trails became impassable even on foot. They had little contact with each other - except during raids.

When the 20th century came, the warriors put western imports to good use by twisting wire from telephone or telegraph lines into multi-barbed arrowheads, over the tip of which they pressed a sharpened, dried and hollowed chicken bone. When the arrow hit, the bone would splinter deep inside the wound like some primitive dum-dum bullet.

The coastal populations are predominantly Muslim and today Christianity has made some inroads into the interior, but indigenous animist cultures survive, mainly because travel remains very difficult. Roads are few and boat is a commoner form of transport.

Alor's chief fame in the outside world lies in its mysterious *mokos* - bronze drums (perhaps more accurately 'gongs') about half a metre high and a third of a metre in diameter, tapered in the middle like an hour-glass and with four ear-shaped handles around the circumference. They're closed at the end with a sheet of bronze that sounds like a bongo when thumped with the hand. There are thousands on the island - the Alorese apparently found them buried in the ground and believed them to be gifts from the gods.

Most mokos have decoration similar to that on bronze utensils made in Java in the 13th and 14th century Majapahit era, but others resemble earlier South-East Asian designs and may be connected with the Dongson culture which developed in Vietnam and China around 700 BC and then pushed its influence south into Indonesia. Later mokos even have Dutch or English-influenced decoration.

Theories of the mokos' origins usually suggest they were brought to Alor from further west by Indian, Chinese or Makassarese traders. This fails to explain why old bronze drums found on Java, Bali, Sumatra and Borneo are larger and display finer workcraft than those on Alor - or why the mokos were found in the ground. It's possible that groups of mokos reached Alor at different periods, perhaps with the better examples being bought up earlier on the traders' routes. Maybe the Alorese buried theirs in now-forgotten times, as an offering to spirits at a time of plague, or to hide them during attacks.

Today the mokos have acquired enormous value among the Alorese and men devote great energy and time to amassing collections of them, along with pigs and land. Such wealth is the only avenue to obtaining a bride in traditional Alorese society. The value of a moko depends mainly on its age: the newest cheapest ones apparently go for 200,000 rp plus. In former times, whole villages would sometimes go to war in an attempt to win possession of a prized moko.

Kalabahi & Around

Kalabahi is the chief town on Alor, at the end of a long, narrow, palm-fringed bay on the west coast. Losmens include the Adi *Dharma* at Jalan Martadinata 12, the *Marlina* on Jalan El Tari, and the *Melati* at Jalan Dr Sutomo 1. Most travellers head for the Adi Dharma, where the owners can advise you on where to go on the island and how to get there. They'll also rent you a vehicle for 30,000 rp a day to reach indigenous villages like Antimerang or Alor Kecil.

Getting There & Away

Merpati flies from Kupang to Kalabahi and back six days a week. Kalabahi airport is 28 km from the town. The PELNI ASPP ferry from Tenau, the port of Kupang, leaves for Kalabahi on Tuesday and Saturday around 12 noon, costing 10,500 rp for the 17-hour voyage.

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departs on Wednesday and Sunday afternoons for the return trip. The Pelni ship *Elang* calls at Kalabahi every week or two on its circuits round various ports in Timor, Flores and southern Maluku.

Most weeks at least one Kalabahi-based boat makes a trip to Lewoleba on Lembata and back, usually reaching Lewoleba in time for its Monday market and leaving there early on Tuesday morning. They'll stop at one or more of Kabir (Pantar), Balauring (eastern Lembata), Waiwerang (Adonara) or Larantuka on the round trip. Boats to look for include the *Karya Dua Lima* and the *Safari*. The fare from Lewoleba to Kalabahi is about 10,000 rp for a roughly 12-hour trip.

Timor

If you arrive in Timor from Darwin, it will hit you with all the shock of Asia. Kupang, the main city, is very Indonesian with its buzzing streets, honking horns, third world smells and sights. Timor's culture however seems rather bland by comparison with that of Sumba or Flores. Away from Kupang, it's little-touristed - a fairly scenic island with a number of destinations that are interesting or agreeable without being unmissable. New interest was added in 1989 when East Timor, a former Portuguese colony, was opened up to foreign tourists for the first time since Indonesia invaded and took it over in 1975.

Timor's landscape is unique with its gaily lontar palms, rocky soils and central mountains dotted with villages of beehive-shaped huts. The island has some fantastic coastline but no tourist-type beach spots as yet, though you can take trips from Kupang to nearby islands for swimming and snorkelling. East Timor's beaches which attracted travellers before 1975 are again accessible.

Thanks to Merpati's twice-weekly flights between Kupang and Darwin since 1986, and to improved transport in Nusa Tenggara, more travellers to or from Australia are now passing through Timor. Some Darwinites are also choosing Timor instead of Bali for holidays because it's infinitely less developed and cheaper to reach.

Apart from Kupang, which is probably the most prosperous town in Nusa Tenggara, Timor is poor, especially the eastern half. West Timor has a population of 1.2 million and East Timor about 650,000. Christianity - both Protestant and Catholic - is widespread, though still fairly superficial in some areas: the old animistic cultures have not been completely eradicated. In the hills of the centre and the east, country folk still defer to their traditional chiefs - though major damage seems to have been done to traditional East Timorese society by the Indonesian takeover.

The dark-skinned and lightly built Timorese resemble the Bataks of Sumatra and the Torajans of Sulawesi. About 14 languages are spoken on the island, both Malay and Papuan types, although *Tetum* (the language of a people who are thought to have first settled in Timor in the 14th century) is understood in most parts.

HISTORY

The Tetum of central Timor are one of the largest ethnic groups on the island. Before the Portuguese and Dutch colonisation they were fragmented into dozens of small states. Skirmishes between them were frequent and headhunting was a popular activity, although when peace returned the captured heads were kindly returned to the kingdom from which they came.

Another major group, the Atoni, are thought to be the earliest inhabitants of Timor and one theory is that they were pushed westward by the Tetum. The Atoni form the predominant population of west Timor and like the Tetum were divided into numerous small kingdoms before the arrival of Europeans. It's

thought that their traditional political and religious customs were strongly influenced by Hinduism, possibly as a result of visits by Javanese traders, but like the Tetum they held to a strong belief in spirits, including ancestor spirits.

The first Europeans in Timor were the Portuguese, perhaps as early as 1512, the year after they captured Melaka. Like Chinese and western Indonesian traders before them, the Portuguese found the island a plentiful source of sandalwood (prized in Europe for its aroma and the medicinal santalol made from the oil). In the mid-17th century the Dutch occupied Kupang, Timor's best harbour, beginning a long conflict for control of the sandalwood trade. In the mid-18th century the Portuguese withdrew to the eastern half of Timor. The division of the island between the two colonial powers, worked out in agreements between 1859 and 1913, gave Portugal the eastern half plus the enclave of Oekussi on the north coast of the western half, while Holland got the rest of the west. Today's Indonesian province of East Timor has the same boundaries as former Portuguese Timor.

Neither European power penetrated far into the interior until the second decade of this century and the island's political structure was left largely intact, both colonisers ruling through the native kings. Right through to the end of Portuguese rule in East Timor many ostensibly Christian villagers continued to subscribe to animist beliefs. When Indonesia won independence in 1949 the Dutch cleared out of West Timor, but the Portuguese still held East Timor - setting the stage for the tragedy that would take place during the 1970s and '80s.

East Timor

Until the end of the 19th century, Portuguese authority over their half of the island was never very strong. Their control was often effectively opposed by the *liurai*, the native Timorese rulers, and by the *mestico*, the influential descendants of Portuguese men and local women. The Dominican missionaries were also involved in revolts or opposition to the government. Eventually a series of rebellions between 1894 and 1912 led to bloody and conclusive 'pacification'.

The colony had been on the decline much earlier as the sandalwood trade fizzled out, and as Portugal fell into a depression after WW I, East Timor drifted into economic torpor. Neglected by Portugal, it was notable only for its modest production of high-quality coffee

and as a distant place of exile for opponents of the Portuguese regime. The ordinary Timorese were subsistence farmers using the destructive *ladang* or slash-and-burn system, with maize (sweet corn) the main crop.

In WW II, though Portugal and her overseas territories were neutral, the Allies assumed that the Japanese would use Timor as a base to attack Australia. Several hundred Australian troops were landed in East Timor and until their evacuation in January 1943 they carried out a guerrilla war which tied down 20,000 Japanese troops, of whom 1500 were killed, on the island. The Australian success was largely due to the support they got from the East Timorese, for whom the cost was phenomenal. The Japanese razed whole villages, seized food supplies and killed Timorese in areas where the Australians were operating. Farms were abandoned in the war zones, resulting in starvation, while other Timorese were killed by Allied bombing. By the end of the war, between 40,000 and 60,000 East Timorese had died.

After the war the Portuguese resumed control. Dili was rebuilt, the plantations were put back in shape, and the production of livestock and grain increased. Even into the '70s, however, there was little industry, no sign of valuable mineral resources and scant improvement in education.

The turning point came on 25 April 1974 when a military coup in Portugal overthrew the Salazar dictatorship. The new government sought to discard the remnants of the Portuguese empire as quickly as possible. With the real possibility of East Timor becoming an independent state, three major political groups quickly formed in the colony:

UDT The original members of the Timorese Democratic Union were mostly officials and small property holders and, although they started out in favour of continued association with Portugal, within a few weeks they were advocating independence.

ASDT From the start the Association of Timorese Social Democrats advocated complete independence for East Timor. Later known as Fretilin (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor), it gained the edge over the UDT, perhaps partly because of its more radical social policies.

Apodeti This party advocated integration with Indonesia. Its membership probably never exceeded a few hundred, and it probably would not have survived if the Indonesians had not given it financial and moral support, eventually turning it into a front for their own goals.

Indonesian leaders had had their beady eyes on East Timor since the 1940s, though before the '70s they were too involved with separatist rebellions, campaigns in Irian Jaya and *Konfrontasi* with Malaysia to do much about it. Fretilin, however, was regarded by many of them as Communist and there were fears that an independent East Timor might inspire separatism in Indonesia. The Australian government also expressed a preference for integration of East Timor into Indonesia.

In East Timor the rumours flew thick and fast and suspicions grew. On 11 August 1975, the UDT staged a coup in Dili which led to a brief civil war between it and Fretilin. Military superiority lay from the outset with Fretilin which was supported by 2000 or so Timorese soldiers in the colony - only a few Portuguese soldiers remained. The bulk of the fighting was over by the end of August and the UDT remnants withdrew to Indonesian Timor.

Fretilin proved surprisingly effective in getting things almost back to normal, but by the end of September Indonesia had decided on a takeover. In October Indonesian troops staged trial attacks just within the East Timor border. East Timor and Fretilin now faced Indonesia alone; the Portuguese were certainly not coming

back. On 7 December 1975 the Indonesians launched their invasion of East Timor with an assault on Dili, coincidentally less than 24 hours after 'Sideshow' Kissinger had left Jakarta.

From the start the invasion met strong resistance from Fretilin troops who quickly proved their worth as guerilla fighters. Though East Timor was officially declared Indonesia's 27th province on 16 July 1976, Fretilin kept up regular attacks on the Indonesians, even on targets very close to Dili, until at least 1977. But gradually Indonesia's military strength and Fretilin's internal divisions and lack of outside support took their effect. By 1989, Fretilin appeared to have been pushed back to just a few hideouts in the far east of the island. Indonesia was confident enough to open up East Timor to foreign tourists in 1989. But the remaining 'low-intensity' security problem seems to warrant the continued presence of 15,000 Indonesian troops (including local militia).

The cost of the takeover to the East Timorese people has been huge. International humanitarian organisations estimate that about 100,000 people may have died in the hostilities and from disease and famine that followed. It's also estimated that 90% of the population has been relocated since 1975 for 'security reasons' with only 20% of villages now occupying ancestral sites, although some people are being moved back.

There are still complaints about indiscriminate arrests, restrictions of movement and human rights abuses. East Timor is the poorest province in Indonesia with an average income of US$200 a year against the national average of US$500 (official figures), but relatively large amounts of money are being spent by the Indonesian government in an effort to improve roads, electricity and water supplies, and social welfare. Despite this, health care is poor with 123 doctors for the population of 650,000. Technical skills are lacking and malaria is a problem.

Compounding the problems is the alleged predominance of the military in economic life. The military deny this, yet private companies are unwilling to get involved. East Timor's most valuable export is high quality coffee, of which it produces 9000 tonnes a year. Most of this is collected and exported through Surabaya by PT Denok, a company run by Indonesian-Chinese businessmen but apparently set up by a group of Indonesian generals with a view to controlling all industry and commerce in East Timor, including the sandalwood trade. Coffee growers say they receive less for their product than growers in West Timor.

Some readers' letters have reported that the police question locals who have been talking to foreigners. After long isolation, the East Timorese are intrigued by westerners. As of April 1989, no permit was required for foreigners to travel to East Timor and even though four districts were officially closed, in practice travellers were getting right through to Tutuala, East Timor's most easterly point. The situation is not expected to change unless there is an unforeseen increase in Fretilin activity.

Books

Probably the best account of events surrounding the Indonesian invasion of East Timor is John Dunn's *Timor - A People Betrayed* (Jacaranda Press, Brisbane, Australia, 1984). Dunn was Australian consul in East Timor from 1962 to 1964; he was also part of an Australian government fact-finding mission to East Timor in June to July 1974 and returned in 1975, just after the Fretilin-UDT war, to lead an Australian relief effort. *Timor, The Stillborn Nation* by Bill Nicol (Widescope International, Melbourne, Australia, 1978) provides something of a balance to Dunn's book: Nicol tends to criticise Fretilin leaders and places much more of the blame on the Portuguese who, he says, provoked the UDT-Fretilin civil war and invited

Indonesian military intervention by their attempts to rid themselves of East Timor as fast as possible.

For the inside story from a Fretilin point of view, read *Funu: The Unfinished Saga of East Timor* by Jose Ramos Horta (Red Sea Press, New Jersey, USA, 1987). Horta was a Fretilin leader in 1975 and has since been its UN representative. Also sympathetic to Fretilin is *The War Against East Timor* by Carmel Budiardjo and Liem Soei Liong, (Pluto Press, Leichhardt, Australia, 1984).

GEOGRAPHY

Timor is 60% mountainous with high plateaux, deep valleys and rocky soils. Its rugged central backbone has many peaks over 2500 metres; the highest, Tata Mai, stands at about 3000 metres, half way along the range.

Most of the narrow south coast plain is covered in tropical vegetation giving way to bushland dominated by eucalypts and acacias on the slopes. Along the north coast the mountains slope right into the sea. The numerous streams become torrents in the wet season and frequently sever the roads, but in the dry season they are just dry beds. For much of the year, the north coast is arid with clumps of gnarled and stunted trees, but the wet season turns it green.

Aggravated by dry winds from northern Australia, the dry season is distinct and results in hunger and water shortages. To remedy the water problem, at least in the west around Soe, there is an intensive programme of small earth-dam building.

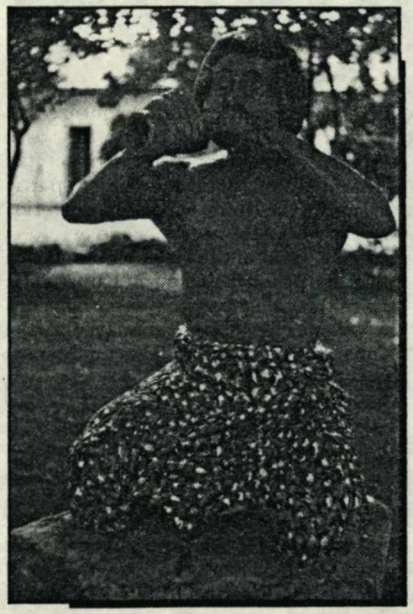
The slash-and-burn method of agriculture is still used to clear fields and the Timorese have never accepted the plough. Teams of seven or eight buffalo will be driven across the fields to turn them into squishy mud for planting. Maize is the staple crop, but dry rice is also important and some irrigated rice is grown in the river valleys.

KUPANG

Kupang is virtually a booming metropolis compared with the overgrown villages that pass for towns in other parts of Nusa Tenggara. It's the capital of East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) province which covers West Timor, Roti, Sawu, the Solor and Alor Archipelagos, Sumba, Flores and Komodo. As such it comes fully equipped with footpaths and brightly decorated bemos with sophisticated sound systems.

The centre is busy, noisy and untidy while the wealthier residential areas are in the suburbs. There's a lot of building going on, particularly on the eastern edge of town.

Merpati's regular Darwin/Kupang flights are attracting many short-term Australian visitors from the Northern Territory. One unpleasant outcome of increased tourism is local youths calling out obscenities (in English) to tourists as they pass you on their motorbikes. This



apart, it's not a bad place to hang around for a few days - Captain Bligh did when he arrived here after his *Bounty* misadventures.

History

The Dutch East India Company occupied Kupang in the middle of the 17th century, mainly in an attempt to gain control of the sandalwood trade. The Portuguese had built a fort at Kupang but abandoned it before the Dutch arrived, leaving the Portuguese-speaking Christian mixed-blood *mestico* population (or the 'black Portuguese' as they were known) to oppose the Dutch. It was not until 1749, after an attack by the mestico on Kupang had been decisively defeated, that the Dutch went more or less unchallenged in west Timor.

Timor was however very much a side-show for the Dutch. Supplies of sandalwood had already dwindled severely by 1700, and by the late 18th century Kupang was little more than a symbol of the Dutch presence in Nusa Tenggara. Not until the 20th century did they pay much attention to the interior of the island.

The original inhabitants of the Kupang area were the Helong who, squeezed by the Atoni, had by the 17th century been limited to a small coastal strip at the western tip of the island. Later, partly because of the Dutch-supported migration of people from the nearby island of Roti to Kupang, most of the Helong migrated to the small island of Semau off Kupang. By the mid-20th century they were confined to just one village near Tenau (the port of Kupang) and several villages on Semau.

Orientation

Kupang is hilly. Its downtown area hugs the waterfront with the main streets - Siliwangi, Garuda, Sumatera, Sumba, Yani, Sumohardjo and Soekarno - forming a large loop which takes in most of the shops. Hotels and losmen are scattered throughout the town. One focal point is the junction of Jalan Siliwangi and Jalan Soekarno, where the central bus and bemo station - known simply as the *Terminal* - is located. Most of the restaurants are around here. Kupang's El Tari airport is 15 km east of town and Tenau Harbour is eight km west.

Information

Tourist Office The tourist office is on Jalan Soekarno near the Terminal. Usually someone speaks good English. They have leaflets and displays with lots of ideas for places to go - including Roti, Sawu and the rest of East Nusa Tenggara. The office is open Monday to Thursday from 7.30 am to 2 pm, Friday from 7.30 am to 1 pm and Saturday from 7.30 am to 12.30 pm.

Communications The main post office, with the poste restante, is at Jalan Palapa 1. It's open Monday to Thursday from 8 am to 2 pm, Friday from 8 to 11 am and Saturday from 8 am to 1 pm. To get there, take a five-lamp bemo from downtown. There's a sub-post office on Jalan Soekarno, a short walk from the Terminal. The Telephone & Telegraph office is on Jalan Urip Sumohardjo.

Money The Bank Dagang Indonesia near the Terminal on Jalan Soekarno will change major currency notes and major US and Australian dollar travellers' cheques. It's open Monday to Friday from 7 am to 12 noon and from 1 to 2.30 pm and Saturday from 7 to 11 am. Bank Negara Indonesia 1946 on Jalan Sumatera, next to *Wisma Maliana*, changes major US and Australian dollar travellers' cheques and some cash. Service is fast here. It's open from 7.30 am to 2.30 pm Monday to Friday and from 7.30 am to 11.30 am on Saturday. Pitoby Travel at Jalan Siliwangi 75 gives about 100 rp less for the US dollar but it's open on Sundays. A money changing office opens at Kupang airport when flights from Darwin come in. It gives same the rate as the banks.

Markets

The main market is the rambling Pasar Inpres off Jalan Suharto in the south of city. To get there, you can take an 'Oepura' bemo down Jalan Suharto and walk the short distance to the market from Jalan Suharto. There's a lesser market on the seafront off Jalan Garuda.

Museum NTT

The interesting East Nusa Tenggara Museum is on Jalan Perintis Kemerdekaan on the eastern edge of the city. It has exhibits of arts, crafts and artefacts from all over the province. There are helpful English-speaking guides and most of the labels are in Indonesian and English. This is a good place to get an introduction to Nusa Tenggara if you've just arrived, or to pull together what you've seen if you're leaving. To get there, take a 'Walikota' bemo from the Terminal. It's open Monday, Thursday and Saturday from 9 am to 12 noon. Entry is free, but give a donation when you leave.

Semau Island

Semau, visible from Kupang, is interesting

to wander round and has some good beaches (where you can snorkel) and freshwater springs. You may be able to organise a boat from one of the fishing villages along the beach outside Kupang or from Tenau. Teddy's Bar in Kupang runs day trips to Semau. The cost for the one-hour each way boat trip and a barbecue lunch is 15,000 rp. You should be able to stay overnight in bungalows run by Teddy's Bar.

Monkey Island (Pulau Kera)

This small island is also visible from Kupang. To get there you may be able to take a boat from Teddy's Bar, though they prefer you to take the Semau trip, or Taman Ria for about 10,000 rp. Or try the fisherfolk!

Lasiana Beach

Lasiana is about 10 km east of town and a busy picnic spot on Sunday. A few stalls sell drinks and snacks or you can buy a *kelapa muda* (young coconut). The beach doesn't look much in the wet season, but it makes a pleasant outing from Kupang during the week. If you walk over the headland through the lontar grove, you'll find more beaches where losmen development is planned. To get to Lasiana, take a 'Tarus' bemo (200 rp) from the Terminal. About three or four km along the Soe road beyond the airport turn-off, there's a road to the left with a sign 'Welcome to Lasiana Beach' above it. Walk down the road for about one km.

Baun

A small, quiet village 25 km south of Kupang in the hilly Amarasi district, Baun is a centre of ikat weaving and has a few Dutch buildings. You can visit the *rumah raja*, the last raja's house, now occupied by his widow. She loves to chat with foreigners and will show you some of her interesting weavings and her rose garden. If your Indonesian is good enough, you can learn a lot about the area's history from her, particularly about WW II. The house is a short walk straight ahead from where the bemo drops you in Baun. Market day in Baun is Saturday. From Baun to the south coast and back is a good day's hike - apparently there's a surf beach down there.

To get to Baun, take a minibus (350 rp) from the Oepura terminal at the south end of Jalan Suharto in Kupang.

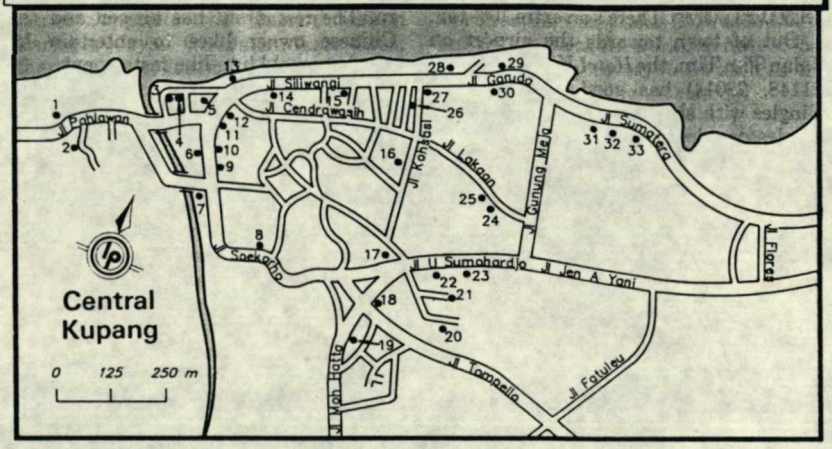
Places to Stay - bottom end

Accommodation in Kupang is spread out, but the efficient bemo system makes everywhere easily accessible. Prices are among the highest in Nusa Tenggara but, with the recent influx of visitors, there are increasing options at the bottom end.

The *Taman Ria Beach Inn*, at Jalan Tim Tim 69 three km from the Terminal, is popular for its cheap dorm prices - 3000 rp per person; other rooms with private mandi cost 5000 or 7500 rp per person. Taman Ria fronts the beach and is set amid one of those quaint, defunct funfairs which crop up around Indonesia. Mouldering concrete tigers peer through the foliage and in one corner lurks the Ozzy Rock Cafe with a bar, which if there's anyone around, cranks into noisy action at about 9.30 pm. If you don't need early nights Taman Ria is reasonable. To get there, catch a one-lamp 'Wali Kota' or 'Kelapa Lima' bemo. Definitely quieter, the *Backpackers* at Jalan Kancil 37B, Air Nona, is about four km from the city centre. It's part of the International Network Group which has hostels in Darwin, Sydney, Los Angeles and elsewhere. The cost is 5000 rp per person in doubles or small dorms. It's a friendly place but rooms are dark and cramped, mosquitoes are active and the shared mandis could be cleaner. You have to eat out - there's a cheap gado-gado warung where Jalan Kancil meets the main road. To get to the hostel, catch a three-lamp bemo from the terminal.

Losmen Rahmat, the signless green and white building next to the mosque on Jalan Lakaan, is more central, and reputedly

1 Dutch Graveyard
2 Pelni
3 Teddy's Bar
4 Pantai Laut Restaurant
5 Toko Sinar Baru
6 Bank Dagang Negara
7 Night Warungs
8 Sub Post Office
9 Tourist Information
10 Restaurant 5 Jaya Raya
11 Bemo & Bus Terminal
12 Toko Columbia
13 Restaurant Karang Mas
14 Pitoby Travel
15 Paris Indah Bus Agent
16 Wisma Setia
17 Church
18 Departemen Pendidikan & Kebudayaan
19 Bank Indonesia
20 Kupang Indah Inn
21 Laguna Inn
22 Bemo Interchange
23 Telephone & Telegraph Office
24 Losmen Rahmat
25 Mosque
26 Garuda
27 Cinema
28 Beach Market
29 Night Warungs
30 Rumah Makan Beringin Jaya
31 Wisma Susi
32 Wisma Maliana
33 Bank Negara Indonesia 1946



friendly, but tatty. Singles/doubles with shared mandi are 3500/5000 rp.

Places to Stay - middle

Many of these places have a range of prices so the middle and top end overlap to some extent. Facing out to sea at Jalan Sumatera 37, the good and fairly central *Wisma Susi* (tel 22172) has a wide range of prices starting with downstairs rooms at 7000 rp single or 8500/12,500 rp for singles/doubles with fan. Upstairs rooms with fan and mandi are 10,000/15,000 rp, more with air-con. Prices include tax. You can buy breakfast for 1500 rp - good enough when it arrives, but something is always missing.

Teddy's Bar (tel 21142), at Jalan Ikan Tongkol 1-3 opposite the seafront close to the Terminal, has rooms with fan and shared bathrooms for 7500/10,000 rp. It's popular with Darwinites.

Losmen Eli Fangidae at Jalan Pahlawan 65, next door to a church about 1½ km from the centre of town towards Tenau, is a quiet, homely place run by a preacher. It costs 6500 rp per person including breakfast. They do your laundry for free.

The *Laguna Inn* (tel 21559, 21384) on Jalan Kelimutu in a quiet, fairly central part of town is busy and popular with Indonesians. Small basic singles are around 5000 rp. Doubles with fan, mandi and a small verandah are 10,000 or 12,000 rp. It's clean and bare but adequate; there's also a restaurant. On the same street the *Kupang Indah Inn* (tel 226382) at Jalan Kelimutu 25A has a range of rooms with fans from 6000/7500 to 8000/10,000 rp, plus more expensive air-con rooms.

The *Wisma Cendana* (tel 21541) is at Jalan Raya El Tari 15, about four km from the centre. To get there, take a five-lamp bemo with a green or red board to Jalan

Raya El Tari. Apparently it's clean and friendly and English is spoken. All rooms have attached mandi and toilet. An economy room with breakfast is 6000 rp single. Singles/doubles with fan and three good Indonesian meals cost 13,500/22,000 rp, with air-con and three meals 18,500/33,000 rp. There's an extra 10% tax.

Out of town towards the airport on Jalan Tim Tim, the *Hotel King Stone* (tel 21148, 22014) has good, clean rooms. Singles with shared mandi cost 7500 rp, singles/doubles with fan or air-con and attached mandi and toilet 12,500/17,500 rp. All rooms have a patio and prices include breakfast. To get there, catch a 'Tarus' or 'Penfui' bemo from the Terminal - the bemos tend to be very full at dusk and stop running at about 8 pm. The beach is a pleasant, short walk from the hotel and the *Rumah Makan Pondok Bambu* out the front is excellent.

Places to Stay - top end

The central *Wisma Setia* on Jalan Kohsasi is 40,000 rp double, including three meals - they won't negotiate a no meals price. The rooms are very clean and the decor tasteful. A bit further out, the *Wisma Maliana* (tel 21879) at Jalan Sumatera 35, next door to the Wisma Susi, has rooms with big double beds, air-con and TV for 20,000/25,000 rp.

The *Hotel Flobamor II* (tel 21346) at Jalan Sudirman 21 next to the Merpati office, has good air-con rooms at 25,000/30,000 rp. It's frequented by Timor's expatriate population.

Kupang's ritziest accommodation is in the *Sasando International Hotel* (tel 22224) on Jalan Perintis Kemerdekaan. It's on a windy hilltop to the south of the main road to the airport. Rooms are air-conditioned and they start at 31,000/36,000 rp.

Places to Eat

Kupang is no gourmet's delight but there are several reasonable places to eat. The best is probably the *Restaurant Lima Jaya Raya* at Jalan Soekarno 15, near the Terminal. It has a long menu of Chinese and Indonesian dishes including sea cucumber, frogs' legs and hens' feet. Gado-gado at 1000 rp is ordinary but the chicken dishes at 2500 rp are quite good. Various seafood meals cost around 3000 rp. The restaurant has air-con and the Chinese owner likes to entertain by playing an old lute-like instrument.

Teddy's Bar at Jalan Ikan Tongkol 1-3 has good food including a few western dishes. A large, tasty cap cai is 2000 rp and good beef, chicken and prawn sates are 2000/2500 rp. Fish, chips and salad is 2500 rp, barbecued meats and seafood 4000 rp. This place is the centre of tourist nightlife with a few hostess-like types floating around and sometimes crowds of Kupang schoolkids lurking outside to watch the antics of drunken Darwinites.

Next door, the *Pantai Laut Restaurant* has good food and amiable staff. Nasi and mie goreng at 1500 rp are filling and there's a variety of seafood, beef and chicken dishes from 3000 rp. The *Restaurant Karang Mas* at Jalan Siliwangi 88, a short walk from the Terminal, is on the seafront but more interesting for its look-at-the-sunset location than its food. It's a bit of a travellers' hang-out, a good place for a cold beer and a snack. Tomato omelettes are 1250 rp, fried prawns from 2000 to 2500 rp and steaks 3000 rp.

On Jalan Garuda, the eastward continuation of Jalan Siliwangi, the *Rumah Makan Beringin Jaya* has good Padang food at reasonable prices and air-con.

Several km further out, along Jalan Tim Tim towards the airport, the *Rumah Makan Pondok Bambu* is worth the effort of getting to. Take a Penfui or Tarus bemo from the Terminal, but don't make the return journey too late as bemos stop about 8 pm. The fare includes a big range of seafood dishes at around 3000 rp, excellent gado-gado at 750 rp and fruit juices at 1000 rp.

Night warungs crop up around town,

particularly along the street leading down to the bridge off Jalan Soekarno, just a short walk from the Terminal. Try *bubur kacang* (mung beans and black rice in coconut milk) for only 250 rp. Gado-gado is 500 rp and there are also sate stalls. Similar stalls set up off Jalan Garuda almost opposite the Rumah Makan Beringin Jaya. On Jalan Ikan Paus, there's an excellent cake shop, the *Toko Nirwana*.

It's quite difficult to get fruit in Kupang. Try the seafront market, the roadside stalls near the *Taman Ria* or make a trip to Pasar Inpres, the main market.

Things to Buy

Timorese ikat is colourful with a huge variety of designs, and there are lots of other embroidered textiles. Purists will be disappointed that natural dyes have all but disappeared from Timor, though you may have some luck in Soe, Kefamenanu, Baun or other rural towns and villages or at Kupang's market - Pasar Inpres - where country people often bring weavings to sell.

Several shops in Kupang sell ikat, handicrafts, old silver jewellery, ornamented bamboo sirih boxes and more - bizarrely shaped lontar leaf hats from Roti make a fun purchase. These shops also have ikat from other parts of East Nusa Tenggara including Sawu and Roti. Prices are quite high and bargaining won't bring them down dramatically, but it's still cheaper to buy the Timorese stuff in Timor than in Bali or elsewhere. Try *Dharma Bakti*, at Jalan Sumba 32, out towards Jalan Tim Tim. *Toko Sinar Baru* on Jalan Siliwangi opposite the Terminal has interesting stock, but is hard to shift on prices. Expect to pay around 100,000 rp for a large Sawu blanket, around 20,000 rp for a *selendang* (shawl) - Sawu designs are distinctive and elegant but natural dyes are rarely used. You can watch ikat weavers at work in Kupang at Ibu Bunga's Sentra Tenun Ikat on Jalan Tifa, about one km south-west of the Terminal. Locals will give you directions. Cloths, shoes and bags are on sale here. Sometimes the shop at Kupang airport has handicrafts for sale at cheaper prices than the city shops.

Outside Kupang, the asking price for woven sarongs may be as little as 25,000 rp but always check the work carefully. Close inspection may reveal flaws such as the two halves not lining up exactly.

Getting There & Away

Kupang is the transport hub of Timor, with buses and flights to and from the rest of the island, plus planes and regular passenger boats to the rest of Nusa Tenggara and beyond.

Permits You should be able to travel freely anywhere in Timor, but if permits are reintroduced for parts of the island you'll probably need to go to Korem (Komando Resor Militer). It's out in the east of the city on Jalan Lalamentik, 2½ km beyond the main post office. To get there, take an 'Oebufi' bemo. It may be advisable to take someone from the tourist office or some other helpful person with you.

Air Merpati flies to and from Darwin twice a week (see the introductory Getting There chapter) and Kupang is well connected to other parts of Indonesia.

Merpati operates most of the flights from Kupang to other parts of Timor including Dili (daily), Oekussi and Atambua. Garuda flies daily to Dili but it's more expensive.

Merpati also runs the bulk of the flights between Kupang and other destinations in Nusa Tenggara. Useful connections - some daily, others a few times a week - include Roti; Sawu; Waingapu and Tambolaka (Waikabubak) on Sumba; Larantuka, Maumere, Ende, Bajawa, Ruteng and Labuhanbajo on Flores. Bouraq also flies to Maumere and Waingapu.

Merpati and Bouraq fly to Denpasar, as

does Garuda for a higher fare. There are a number of flights further afield - for example to Jakarta with all three airlines or to Ujung Pandang and Balikpapan with Merpati.

Merpati (tel 21121, 21961) is at Jalan Sudirman 21 on a three-lamp bemo route, next to the Hotel Flobamor II. It's open Monday to Saturday from 8 am to 4 pm, Sunday and holidays from 9 am to 3 pm. Bouraq (tel 21421) is almost opposite at Jalan Sudirman 20. Garuda (tel 21205) is more central at Jalan Kohsasi 13. There are also numerous air ticket agents around town, including Pitoby Travel (tel 21222) at Jalan Siliwangi 75, which is open Sunday.

Bus Not too long ago, roads in Timor were really rotten. It was a pretty close thing whether the Portuguese half was more or less neglected than the Indonesian half prior to the invasion. But if the war in East Timor has benefited anyone other than arms manufacturers, it's you. The road from Kupang to Atambua via Soe and Kefamenanu is now well-surfaced all the way - so well in fact that some drivers put their feet down and speed manically. Most roads in East Timor are still pretty rough with only a few sealed stretches, the better ones being between Dili and Baukau (now the chief military air-base), Dili and Maliana, and Dili and Same. (The latter two pass through the main coffee growing districts).

Kupang's main bus and bemo terminal, known simply as *Terminal*, is near the waterfront where Jalan Soekarno and Jalan Siliwangi meet. Leaving Kupang for the east, daytime buses start at the Terminal and subject you to a tedious sightseeing tour of Kupang as they search out more passengers and finally get going an hour or two after you hop in. The later in the morning a bus sets off, the longer it spends *keliling* (driving round in circles). Buses to Soe (three hours) cost 2000 rp, to Kefamenanu (five hours) 3000 rp and to Atambua (eight hours) 4500 rp (day), 6000 rp (night) - times include *keliling*.

From Kupang to Dili, if you're a glutton for punishment, you may be able to go straight through but most people overnight in Atambua. For more details, see the Dili section.

There's an agent for the Paris Indah night bus to Kefamenanu and Atambua on Jalan Siliwangi. A few yards towards Jalan Siliwangi from the town centre Terminal, Toko Columbia is an agent for three daily buses to Atambua and Dili (16,000 rp) at 7 am, 3 pm and 7 pm. Toko Sinar Baru across the road is an agent for the Tunas Mekar night bus leaving at 7 pm to Atambua and Dili.

Coming back to Kupang from the east, some buses stop at the Oebobo terminal on Jalan Perintis Kemerdekaan on the eastern edge of Kupang, close to the Museum NTT. There are frequent bemos into town from there.

Boat Regular ships to Flores, Sawu, Roti, Alor, Sumba and further afield leave from the port of Tenau, eight km west of Kupang. From the Kupang bemo Terminal a 'Tenau' bemo (250 rp) will take you straight to Tenau harbour and drop you right outside the harbour master's office (tel 21790) at Jalan Yos Soedarso 23.

Pelni and the ferry company Perum ASPP both have ticket offices in Kupang. Pelni is at Jalan Pahlawan 3 within walking distance of the Terminal. The *Kelimutu* leaves Kupang every second Sunday, reaching Semarang on Java a week later then returning by the same route in reverse. From Kupang the *Kelimutu* stops at Ende, Waingapu, Bima, Ujung Pandang, Lembar, Padangbai, Surabaya, Banjarmasin, and Semarang.

First class/2nd class/economy fares on the *Kelimutu* include: Ende (11 hrs) 31,600/25,100/14,100 rp, Waingapu (21 hrs) 45,000/36,700/18,400 rp, Bima (36 hrs) 72,800/60,000/31,600 rp, and Ujung Pandang (60 hrs) 86,000/66,700/34,900 rp.

Pelni also runs the KM *Elang* which loops every 10 days or so round Timor and the small islands to the north. A typical route is Kupang, Larantuka, Kalabahi, Kupang again, Oekussi, Atapupu, Dili, Kisar in southern Maluku, Kalabahi, Kupang.

Pelni's *Baruna Eka* and/or *Baruna Fajar* do about one circuit a week round Kupang, Sawu, Ende, Waingapu, Sawu, Kupang, sometimes with extra stops such as Maumbawa in Flores, south of Bajawa. The ships usually spend the day in port and sail overnight. From Kupang to Sawu is overnight and costs 7550 rp. Kupang to Ende takes two nights and one day for 10,150 rp. Kupang to Waingapu is three nights and two days for 12,150 rp.

The Perum ASPP ferry office (tel 21140) at Jalan Cak Doko 20, sells tickets the day before departure for the ferries *Kerapu I*, *Kerapu II* and *Madidihang* to Larantuka (Flores), Kalabahi (Alor), Sawu and Roti. The office is open from 8 am to 4 pm, and a five-lamp bemo from downtown gets you there. The Larantuka ferry leaves Tenau on Monday and Thursday afternoons. The fare is 8250 rp per person, 7700 rp for a motorbike and 75,000 rp for a car. It's a 14-hour overnight trip, sometimes via Lembata or Adonara. See under Larantuka for more on this ferry.

The Kalabahi ferry leaves Tenau on Tuesday and Saturday around midday. It's about a 12-hour trip and the fare is 10,500 rp. The Sawu ferry leaves on Thursday afternoons and costs 8250 rp. There are ferries to Roti on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday mornings. The four-hour trip costs 3200 rp.

The mission ship *Ratu Rosario*, which plies the Kupang-Surabaya route, makes a loop every three weeks which takes her to many of the islands of Nusa Tenggara. She will take passengers.

Other You can rent cars or motorcycles or fix up tours to places like Semau island, Soe, the surf beach near Baun, or Roti at Teddy's Bar.

Getting Around

Kupang's El Tari airport is 15 km east of the city centre. To get a bemo from the airport, walk out of the gates and about 200 metres down the road to a junction where the bemos wait. The fare to town is 200 rp. A taxi from the airport into the city is a fixed 5000 rp. The airport has a reasonable restaurant. From the city centre, 'Penfui' and 'Baumata' bemos go to the airport.

Kupang is too spread out to do much walking - you need the bemos. The bemo system is efficient if very noisy. Music is played full blast and is heavy on the bass - Kupangites like their music loud! The hub of the bemo system is the Terminal, at the junction of Jalan Soekarno and Jalan Siliwangi. From here bemos zoom up and down the main streets. Many do a loop round Siliwangi, Garuda, Sumatera, Sumba, Yani and Sumohardjo before heading out to the suburbs.

You can identify bemos both by what's written on their route-board, and by the number of lamps (*lampu*) on top of the route-board. For example, all three-lamp bemos go to the suburb of Air Nona. All bemos within town cost 150 rp.

CAMPLONG

Camplong, 41 km from Kupang on the Soe road, has some caves, a small forest and an artificial lake. The Camplong convent runs a reasonable penginapan. Rooms with attached mandi are 6000 rp single, including breakfast and dinner.

SOE

Soe, with its backdrop of hills and cooler temperatures, makes a pleasant change from Kupang. The road from Kupang passes through beautiful countryside, reminiscent of Australia's bush. Soe is a sprawl of wooden and iron-roofed houses, but there's a large market where you'll see people in their traditional garb.

Like most of rural Timor, Soe district is very poor: in 1985 the average annual income here was the equivalent of about

US$140, against US$210 for East Nusa Tenggara province as a whole, and it's a poor province. Apples used to provide the area with a steady income, but in 1988 a bug killed all the trees.

A number of Australian expatriates live in Soe and Kefamenanu, around 100 km further east. Australian aid projects include building small dams around Soe to cope with dry season water shortages. Health education projects are also planned.

Lopo, the local beehive-shaped houses, give the region a distinctive character but they have been banned by the authorities who consider them unhealthy as they're small and smoky. The locals, however, believe that their new houses are equally unhealthy as they're cold - so they construct new lopos behind the approved houses. Another smaller type of lopo, which acts as a meeting place, has no walls and a toadstool-like roof.

Orientation

Soe's bus and bemo terminal is on the far side of Soe if you're coming from Kupang. Accommodation is on and near Jalan Diponegoro in the town centre, a km or so back from the terminal. The market is a km in the opposite direction from the terminal. To get to the losmens, turn left out of the bus station and walk uphill past the post office, then turn right at the first junction.

Around Soe

There are village markets worth visiting from Soe. Niki Niki, 34 km to the east along the main road, is the site of some old royal graves. Its busy market is on Wednesdays when people come in from miles around - it's supposed to be a good place to buy weavings. One reader's letter reported visiting Ayotupas which has a 'great' market. To get there, hop on a truck in Niki Niki. The uncomfortable trip on a shocking road is apparently worth it. Oenlasi is 58 km north-east of Soe, high up in the rugged mountains. Buses or trucks go there from Soe, at least on Tuesdays for the weekly market.

Kapan, 21 km north of Soe, has its interesting market on Thursdays when the roads are blocked with stalls. The village is situated on steep slopes from where you can see Gunung Mutis (2470 metres).

Fatumenasi

This town, 20 km beyond Kapan on the slopes of Gunung Mutis, doesn't have a market but has great views of the surrounding rocky, alpine landscape. Some trucks run between Kapan and Fatumenasi, or charter a jeep from Kapan for 20,000 rp - try the Chinese shopowner there.

Weaving

There are good weavings to be had in Soe itself. The shop attached to the *Wisma Bahagia* has an excellent but expensive collection. Bargaining in Bahasa Indonesia will drop the price a little. Locals come around to the losmens to show you weavings which are much cheaper, but sometimes poor in quality. You can watch women weaving in the kampungs on the edge of the town - you're likely to be invited there.

Places to Stay & Eat

The best and most expensive place to stay is the *Wisma Bahagia* (tel 15) at Jalan Diponegoro 72. Clean singles/doubles with shared mandi are 8000/10,000 rp, with attached mandi from 9000/12,500 rp. Its restaurant is good with basic Indonesian dishes at 1500 rp, fried chicken and other meat dishes at around 3000 to 4000 rp.

Around the corner on Jalan Kartini, the brightly-decorated *Losmen Anda* has a talkative English/Dutch/German-speaking owner from Roti who used to work with Save the Children on Java. Basic rooms without private mandi cost 3000 rp per person, 3500 rp with private mandi. They cook reasonable meals for around 1000 rp and throw in the occasional snack. The

Wisma Cahaya TTS next door is 3000 rp per person.

There are a few warungs and rumah makan near the market. Try the *Restaurant Karya*. Keep your eyes open for mandarins and avocados which sometimes appear at the bus station. As fruit is scarce in Timor, these are a treat.

Getting There & Away

Buses from Kupang cost 2000 rp and the 110-km journey takes three to four hours, including *keliling* in Kupang. It's best to set off early and get a 6.30 or 7 am bus as the chances are your bus will fill up quickly and leave sooner. If you ask, your bus may drop you off at a losmen in Soe before going on to the bus terminal.

Leaving Soe, many buses circle the town on the way so you will probably be able to pick up one at your losmen. Buses to Kupang leave regularly between sunrise and sunset. Buses to Kefamenanu (1500 rp) leave early in the morning and around 12 noon.

In Soe, bemos run around town and to nearby villages. The fare to both Niki Niki and Kapan is 500 rp.

KEFAMENANU

Kefamenanu, 217 km from Kupang, is cool and quiet but apart from some lovely walks to surrounding hills, there's little to hold you. The town had a reputation in the past as a place to buy fine rugs. Locals bring around reasonable ikats to the losmens and you could strike a bargain. Oelolok, a weaving village 26 km from 'Kefa' by bus and a further three km by bemo, has a Tuesday market.

Places to Stay & Eat

Best value is the *Losmen Ariesta* on Jalan Basuki Rachmat. It has big, clean doubles with attached mandi and patio at 11,000 rp; smaller singles/doubles with shared mandi are 3300/6600 rp. There's a garden with a brightly painted dragon and a fish pond. The restaurant here serves good food, but you need to let them know early what you want.

The *Losmen Setangkai* is on Jalan Sonbay close to the central intersection near the market. Run by a friendly family, the clean rooms cost 4400 rp per person. Next door and directly opposite the market is the *Rumah Makan Surabaya* with cheap Indonesian food. About 300 metres south of the market, the *Losmen Soko Windu* on Jalan Kartini has basic rooms at 3850/7700 rp, including breakfast.

Getting There & Away

The market doubles as the bus and bemo station. Buses between Kupang and Kefa cost 3000 rp. Buses leave Kupang early in the morning. From Kefa to Kupang there are several buses in the morning and two at night. The journey takes five hours if there's no stop in Soe. To or from Soe costs 1500 rp and takes two hours. There are regular buses to Atambua (2000 rp, three hours).

OEKUSSI

This former Portuguese coastal enclave north-west of Kefamenanu is part of East Timor province. When East Timor was re-opened to tourists in January 1989, travellers were only permitted to visit Oekussi on condition that they passed straight through. The situation should have eased by now.

ATAMBUA & BELU

Atambua is the major town at the eastern end of West Timor. It's a pleasant enough place with amiable people. Overland travellers to East Timor usually break the long bus journey between Kupang and Dili by overnighting here.

Atambua is the capital of Belu (formerly Tetun) province which borders East Timor. Formerly you needed a permit, which was rarely given, to enter Belu. The district is mainly dry-farmed using traditional time-consuming methods though there are some wet padi lands on

the south coast. Belu has some beautiful scenery and unspoilt villages.

Some readers have reported getting as far as Betun, 60 km south of Atambua, where there are a couple of losmens and rumah makan. The nearby villages of Kletek, Kamanasa and Bolan are apparently worth visiting - you can see flying foxes and the sun set over the mountains at Kletek.

Places to Stay & Eat

Losmen Nusantara is the best value in Atambua at 6000 to 7500 rp per person, including breakfast. The clean rooms have attached mandis and the people are friendly. *Wisma Sahabat* at Jalan Merdeka 7 has been going a longtime and standards have slipped. It costs 4000 rp per person including breakfast.

Eat at the *Rumah Makan Sinar Kasih* which is a five-minute walk from the Wisma Sahabat. It has quite a long menu and decent-sized helpings at decent prices. There are also a couple of warungs in the vicinity of the Wisma Sahabat.

Getting There & Away

For details of buses to Atambua from Kupang, see the Kupang section. In Atambua the Pitoby Express Bus 'Horus' (a night bus to Kupang) can be booked at the Restoran Roda Baru at Jalan Merdeka 73.

Buses from Atambua to Dili cost 10,000 rp and leave early in the morning, reaching Dili around 3 or 4 pm. Your losmen should help with the booking. The journey may not be straightforward in the wet season - see the Atambua to Dili section for details.

Merpati has some flights between Atambua and Kupang.

ATAMBUA TO DILI

Atapupu, 25 km from Atambua, is a major port for the export of cattle to other parts of Indonesia and to Hong Kong and Singapore. You might find boats to other islands here.

During the wet season, you may have to get out of your bus and wade across the River Loes, about 20 km east of Atapupu. If it's running high, dinghies are used to ferry passengers across. Another bus collects you on the other side.

In early 1989 Stephen Meredith from Darwin experienced the river crossing like this:

> The operation took over two hours as there was only one dinghy which took about eight people at a time, and there were three busloads of 20 passengers each plus truckloads of people, livestock and freight to be ferried across. . . . A packed lunch and drink were provided by the bus company before we started the crossing. This is an experience not to be missed. . .

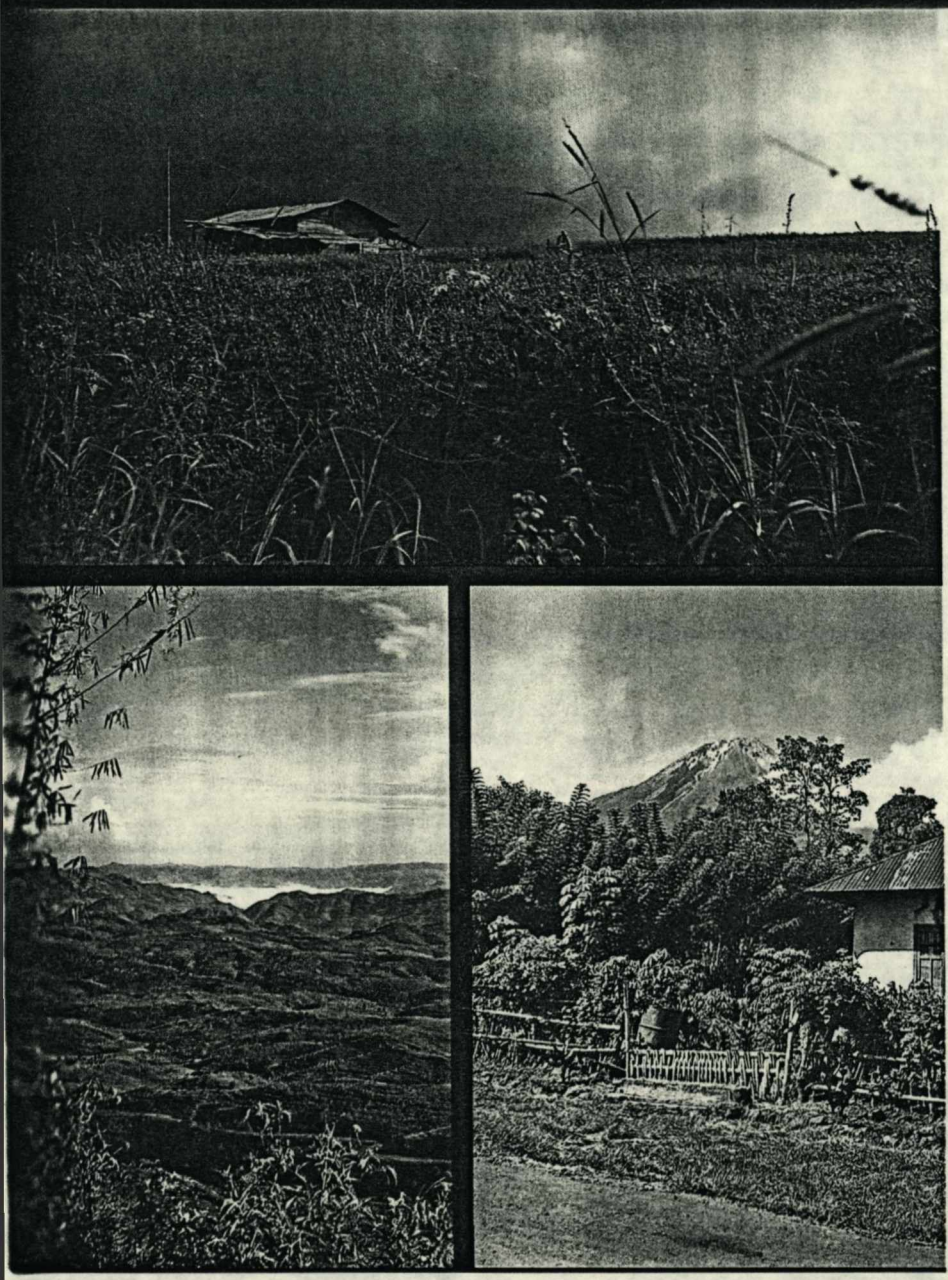
Maliana is the first town inside East Timor. The *Losmen Purwosari Indah* costs 12,500 rp per person. Ermera, about 2½ hours south-west of Dili, is next and has no accommodation. This was the main coffee town of Portuguese Timor. Following the Indonesian invasion the plantations and former Portuguese state holdings were taken over by the PT Denok company. The improvement of East Timor's roads by the Indonesians has been done not only for military purposes but also to assist PT Denok's exploitation of the former colony.

Maubara on the coast west of Dili has an old European-built fort. This was the centre of one of the most important old kingdoms in Portuguese Timor and it was here in 1893 that the first of a series of revolts took place, eventually leading to bloody pacification of the island by the Portuguese.

DILI

Dili was once the capital of Portuguese Timor. When the English scientist Alfred Russel Wallace spent several months here in 1861, he noted Dili as:

> . . .a most miserable place compared with even



Top: Near Ruteng, Flores, Nusa Tenggara (AS)
Left: Near Ruteng, Flores, Nusa Tenggara (AS)
Right: Between Ruteng and Bajawa, Nusa Tenggara (AS)